

No. 471, H. Con. Res. 102; and rollcall No. 472, H. Res. 298.

REQUIRING UNITED STATES PLAN TO ENDORSE AND OBTAIN OBSERVER STATUS FOR TAIWAN AT WORLD HEALTH ASSEMBLY

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2739) to amend Public Law 107-10 to require a United States plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health Assembly in May 2002 in Geneva, Switzerland, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2739

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. AMENDMENTS TO PUBLIC LAW 107-10.

(a) FINDINGS.—Section 1(a) of Public Law 107-10 (115 Stat. 17) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(12) On May 11, 2001, President Bush stated in his letter to Senator Murkowski that the United States ‘should find opportunities for Taiwan’s voice to be heard in international organizations in order to make a contribution, even if membership is not possible’, further stating that his Administration ‘has focused on finding concrete ways for Taiwan to benefit and contribute to the WHO.’”

“(13) On May 16, 2001, as part of the United States delegation to the World Health Assembly meeting in Geneva, Switzerland, Secretary of Health and Human Services Tommy Thompson announced to the American International Club the Administration’s support of Taiwan’s participation in the activities of the WHO.”

(b) PLAN.—Section 1(b)(1) of Public Law 107-10 (115 Stat. 17) is amended by striking “May 2001” and inserting “May 2002”.

THE SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. THORNBERRY). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN).

Mr. GILMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to voice my strong support of H.R. 2739 amending Public Law 107-10 to require a United States plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health Assembly in May, 2002. The World Health Organization has allowed observers to participate in its past activities, including such activities as the Palestinian Liberation Organization, the Order of Malta, and the Holy Sea.

As a founding member of the World Health Organization, the Republic of China, Taiwan, had participated for 24 years as a full member in WHO’s programs and activities, and made significant contributions to the fulfillment of that organization’s objectives. Since the admission of the People’s Republic

of China to the U.N. forced Taiwan to depart from the World Health Organization in 1972, Taiwan, which has a population of more than 23 million, has more people than 75 percent of the member states in the WHO, but has been denied access to the WHO.

Over the years, Taiwan has offered its resources, scientists and health practitioners to people in need throughout the world. Taiwan’s absence from the WHO system has become a missing link in the global framework of health and medical care, and it is long overdue that the world unites Taiwan’s hands so that the world may benefit from its expertise.

Accordingly, Madam Speaker, I strongly support H.R. 2739 providing observer status for Taiwan and the World Health Organization, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation. Let me first commend my colleague from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) for his persistence in pushing Taiwan’s observer status at the WHO. I also commend the chairman, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE) and chairman emeritus, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) for their strong support of this legislation.

Congress has addressed this issue several times, Madam Speaker, and we will continue to raise it until this inequity is resolved. Madam Speaker, the World Health Organization makes a major contribution to the international community every single day. WHO has new and innovative programs to stop the spread of HIV-AIDS and other infectious diseases. It has programs of development of basic health care services throughout the developing world, and it provides humanitarian aid to those in need.

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As we speak, the World Health Organization is laying the groundwork for helping to meet health care needs in a post-conflict Afghanistan.

In this long and difficult struggle, the WHO and its member countries should be looking for help wherever they can get it. Unfortunately, due to opposition by the Chinese Government in Beijing, Taiwan’s efforts to obtain observer status to the annual World Health Assembly meetings in Geneva have fallen on deaf ears. Although the administration has indicated support for Taiwan’s bid for observer status, it is unwilling to ruffle any feathers in Beijing to make this bid a reality. The Department of State argues that the majority of WHO members would never support observer status for Taiwan and, therefore, the United States should not make an effort on Taiwan’s behalf.

Madam Speaker, this committee should strongly reject this defeatist and weak-kneed logic. We should demand that the administration make a concerted effort to ensure that Taiwan participates in this critical international organization. Their bid may fail, but I can guarantee that Taiwan will never be allowed to participate unless we try to get them through the door.

Madam Speaker, Taiwan is a strong, prosperous and vibrant democracy. It has the financial, scientific, medical and humanitarian resources that can help the World Health Organization and all of its many member states who desperately need help. Taiwan is not even asking to join the WHO as a state but rather just as an observer. The case for Taiwan’s observer status at the WHO is clear and the administration should do its utmost to make it happen.

I strongly support H.R. 2739 and urge all of my colleagues to do so, as well.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California for his strong support of this measure. I also want to take this opportunity to thank the sponsor of the measure, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) for introducing the measure.

Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROHRBACHER), a member of our Committee on International Relations.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) for the leadership that he provides on this and issues that are tied to the Republic of China, also to the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and, of course, to the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN). We do have a bipartisan committee. Although we do have some heated debates at times, it is measures like this that demonstrate that the basic values that bind us together are much stronger than the disagreements that we might have.

The Republic of China on Taiwan is a shining example to the world not only of democracy but of healthy and decent living, as well as, I might add, an example of charity. Over these last 50 years, the people who have lived on the island of Taiwan have seen their standard of living rise dramatically. This, of course, while in other parts of the world in other developing nations, some of those nations have not developed like that. And then some nations that have developed economically have not seen the benefits of that development translated into healthier living for their populations. But in Taiwan, one is amazed to find that not only have we seen a dramatic rise in their

standard of living, but we see the health of the general population has increased dramatically as well.

Diseases which used to ravage the populations of the island nations in the Pacific and in Asia, those diseases on Taiwan have not only been brought under control but have been somewhat eradicated. This by a commitment to the inoculation of young children and, yes, the inoculation of the entire population against such diseases as well as this leveling of health standards which has made Taiwan a very nice place to visit and a very nice place to live and a very clean place to live as compared to other developing countries.

But not only in this standard of health and decency. They have a health care system there which is exemplary to other countries in Asia, but what we also see there is a spirit of charity that sometimes we do not see in developing nations. The Su Chi Foundation in Taiwan, for example, gives out hundreds of millions of dollars over the years to countries and to peoples who are in need in areas that are in distress. In Afghanistan yes, but in many other countries that people are in turmoil and other international institutions have not been able to provide help, the Su Chi Foundation have stepped in and given people in desperate circumstances aid in terms of health care, aid in terms of blankets and other humanitarian services. This spirit of charity is very exemplary of Taiwan. They have been very involved as a government as well, but the Su Chi Foundation, let me add, is all contributions made voluntarily by the people of Taiwan themselves.

The Republic of China on Taiwan has earned our respect and has accomplished great things. They should be included, at least if nothing else, as an observer for the World Health Organization. Why should the Republic of China have that right? Because they have earned it. They have earned our respect, they have treated their people decently, they have shown charity, they have had a commitment to health. What more do we need? They are also a democratic government.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), a distinguished member of the Committee on International Relations.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the legislation before us, H.R. 2739, which facilitates Taiwan's participation in the World Health Organization.

In follow-up to earlier measures enacted into law by this Congress, H.R. 2739 requires the United States delegation to the World Health Organization meetings in Geneva next May to submit to Congress a detailed plan of action for obtaining observer status for Taiwan at the World Health Organiza-

tion summit. I congratulate the author of the legislation, the distinguished gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN), for his longtime leadership on this issue. I further commend the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the chairman of the Committee on International Relations, as well as my good friend, the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN), who currently is the manager of this legislation, and certainly our ranking Democratic member, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), for bringing this matter to the floor. I am deeply honored to join my colleagues in support of this bipartisan legislation.

Madam Speaker, the World Health Organization is the preeminent international health organization in the world. In its charter, the World Health Organization sets forth the crucial objectives of attaining the highest possible level of health care for all people. Yet today the 23 million citizens of the Republic of China on Taiwan are still denied appropriate and meaningful participation in the international health forums and programs conducted by the World Health Organization. This is simply wrong and inexcusable and must be corrected.

Access to the World Health Organization ensures that the highest standards of health, information and services are provided, facilitating the eradication of disease and improvement of public health worldwide. The work of the World Health Organization is particularly crucial today given the tremendous volume of international travel which has heightened the transmission of communicable diseases, such as HIV/AIDS, between borders.

With over some 190 countries participating in the World Health Organization, it is a travesty that Taiwan is not permitted to receive World Health Organization benefits, especially when you consider Taiwan's 23 million citizens outnumber the population of three-fourths of WHO's member states. This lack of access to WHO protections has caused the good people of Taiwan to suffer needlessly, such as in 1998 when a deadly, yet preventable, virus killed 70 Taiwanese children and infected more than 1,100 others.

Madam Speaker, there is no good nor valid reason why Taiwan should be denied at least observer status with the World Health Organization. As a strong democracy and one of the world's most robust economies, Taiwan rightfully should participate in the health services and medical protections offered by the WHO. Conversely, the World Health Organization stands to benefit significantly from the financial and technological contributions that Taiwan has offered many times in the past. This is particularly relevant at a time when the WHO's resources shall be severely stretched to address the health crisis in a rebuilding Afghanistan.

Madam Speaker, Congress has spoken out forcefully on this issue before and we should stop the foot dragging. This legislation before us mandates that the administration should develop and submit a detailed plan of action to achieve this goal, observer status for Taiwan at the May 2002 World Health Organization summit. I urge my colleagues to adopt this worthy legislation.

Madam Speaker, Taiwan a couple of weeks ago was just admitted as a member of the World Trade Organization and rightly so given the fact that Taiwan is one of the leading economic powers in the Asia-Pacific region and certainly with our own country. I am certain Taiwan will also contribute substantially in terms of funding projects and supporting scientific and health-related programs that are sponsored by the World Health Organization.

Just last week we were privileged to visit with the Secretary General of the Democratic Party of Taiwan as well as the chairperson of the Taiwan Mainland Council. Both leaders demonstrated a keen understanding of the issues affecting the Asia-Pacific region and more importantly a demonstration of how democracy has advanced in the course of the past 10 years in this country.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker. I rise to voice my strong support for H.R. 2793, amending Public Law 107-10 to require a United States plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health Assembly in May 2002. WHO has previously allowed observers to participate in its past activities, including the Palestine Liberation Organization, the Order of Malta, and the Holy See.

As a founding member of the WHO, the Republic of China (Taiwan) had participated for 24 years as a full member in WHO's programs and activities, and made great contributions to the fulfillment of the organization's objectives. Upon the admission of the People's Republic of China (PRC) to the UN, Taiwan was forced to depart from the WHO in 1972. Taiwan, with a population of more than 23 million and more people than 75 percent of the member states in the WHO, has been denied access to the WHO.

Over the years, Taiwan has offered its resources, scientists, and health practitioners to people in need around the world. Taiwan's absence from the WHO system has become a missing link in the global framework of health and medical care. It is long overdue that the world unties Taiwan's hands so that the world may benefit by its Resources and Special talents.

Accordingly, I strongly urge support for H.R. 2739, providing observer status for Taiwan in the World Health Organization.

Mr. FORBES. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2739, which would require the United States to take positive steps to ensure that Taiwan is afforded an opportunity to participate in the World Health Assembly in May 2002.

Taiwan, with its population of 23.5 million people, is a leader in its region in public health, surpassing its Asian neighbors in life expectancy and maintaining maternal and infant mortality rates comparable to those in western countries. They have participated in medical and humanitarian ventures, helping the people of El Salvador when they were devastated by an earthquake in January. Furthermore, the Taiwanese public health agency has demonstrated an interest in collaborating with its counterparts in other nations, including the United States' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, on a wide range of public health issues. Taiwan has much to contribute to the global community and it should not be arbitrarily precluded from participating in the annual health assembly.

Earlier this year, the Congress passed legislation calling on the United States Government to take affirmative action to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual World Health Organization summit in Geneva, Switzerland. Taiwan is already a member of international bodies, such as the Asian Development Bank and Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC). Observer status at the World Health Organization is a logical next step. And, such observer status is not unusual, having been granted for the PLO, the Order of Malta and the Holy See in the past.

I am pleased that the President and Administration officials have voiced their support for Taiwan's participation in the activities of the World Health Organization. I encourage my colleagues to again show their strong support for this proposal and to support this legislation today.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GILMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. GILMAN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2739, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title of the bill was amended so as to read: "A bill to amend Public Law 107-10 to authorize a United States plan to endorse and obtain observer status for Taiwan at the annual summit of the World Health Assembly in May 2002 in Geneva, Switzerland, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MAKING PERMANENT THE AUTHORITY TO REDACT FINANCIAL DISCLOSURE STATEMENTS OF JUDICIAL EMPLOYEES AND JUDICIAL OFFICERS

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and concur in the Senate amendments to the bill (H.R. 2336) to make permanent the authority to redact financial

disclosure statements of judicial employees and judicial officers.

The Clerk read as follows:

Senate amendments:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF SUNSET PROVISION.

Section 105(b)(3)(E) of the Ethics in Government Act of 1978 (5 U.S.C. App.) is amended by striking "2001" each place it appears and inserting "2005".

Amend the title so as to read: "An Act to extend for 4 years, through December 31, 2005, the authority to redact financial disclosure statements of judicial employees and judicial officers."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2336, the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Wisconsin?

There was no objection.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I have a lengthier statement which I will put in the RECORD, but in the interest of time let me explain the bill and the Senate amendment. Section 7 of the Identity Theft and Assumption Deterrence Act of 1998 allows the Judicial Conference to redact portions of financial disclosure statements for judges and other judicial officers and employees where the Judicial Conference makes a determination that public disclosure will jeopardize the safety of the judge, the judge's family, or the judicial officer or the judicial officer's family. This provision sunsets on December 31, 2001, in the absence of further legislative action. The House passed this legislation with a permanent extension of the redaction authority. The other body amended the House bill for a 4-year sunset. So with the 4-year sunset, the redaction authority would once again expire on December 31, 2005. I believe that it is a legitimate compromise. It allows the Congress in 4 years to review whether these redactions have been done in a manner that preserves the thrust of public disclosure without jeopardizing the lives and safety of judges and their families; and thus I would urge concurrence in the Senate amendment.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise to join the distinguished chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary in supporting House passage of H.R. 2336, as amended by the Senate. This bill allows a Federal judge to request redaction of her financial disclosure forms, but only if redaction is necessary to protect the judge against an identified security threat. Such authority exists under current law, but sunsets on December 31.

The September 11 tragedy and events thereafter heighten the security concerns that make this legislation necessary. On October 16, the House passed a slightly different version of H.R. 2336 under suspension of the rules. The House-passed version permanently extended the ability of judges to request redaction of their financial disclosure reports. The Senate version on which we vote today extends the redaction authority for only 4 years. While I continue to believe permanent extension would be preferable, the looming December 31 sunset of the redaction authority makes it imperative that we move quickly to enact the Senate amendment.

This redaction authority is appropriately limited, and, thus, does not raise concerns about undo restrictions on public access to financial disclosure reports. A judge's report may only be redacted if the Judicial Conference and the U.S. Marshals Service find that revealing personal and sensitive information could endanger that judge. Furthermore, the report can only be redacted to the extent necessary to protect a judge and only for as long as a danger exists.

It does not appear that the redaction authority has been abused to date. Of 2,350 judges filing reports in calendar year 2000, only 6 percent had their reports redacted, wholly or partially. Typically the information redacted is limited to such things as a spouse's place of work, the location of a judge's second home, or the school at which a judge teaches law. It is obvious how a person with ill will could misuse this information to harm a judge or her family.

The law requires that the Judicial Conference, in concert with the Department of Justice, file an annual report detailing the number and circumstances of redactions. This statutory reporting requirement enables Congress to monitor for any abuse of the redaction authority.

I think enactment of H.R. 2336 is necessary to protect the security of our Nation's judges, and I urge my colleagues to vote for it.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by